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FROM A BOOK FUND COMMEMORATING
RUTH GERALDINE ASHEN
CLASS OF 1931

It's a sad thing
  when a man is to be so soon forgotten
And the shining in his soul
  gone from the earth
With no thing remaining;

And it's a sad thing
  when a man shall die
And forget love
  which is the shiningness of life;

But it's a sadder thing
  that a man shall forget love
And he not dead but walking in the field
  of a May morning
And listening to the voice of the thrush.

—R.G.A., in *A Yearbook of Stanford Writing*, 1931

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JOHN DUDLEY,

DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

AND

SONGS AND POEMS.

JOHN DUDLEY,

DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND

An Historical Tragedy.

AND

SONGS AND POEMS.

BY

WELBORE ST. CLAIR BADDELEY.

LONDON:
HARDWICKE AND BOGUE, 192, PICCADILLY, W.
1879.

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PROLOGUE.

NOT for their ears is this our song attuned
Who've wept, like us, o'er the great works of eld,
Nor yet for theirs whose voices have communed
With him—high-minstrel of Van Artevelde;
Nor is our vanity become so bold
To hope full audience, underneath this sun,
Of them whose forward hearts each day unfold
Before the tuneful Muse of Tennyson;
Or Morris—he whose sun-stained Saxon hand
Tempers the genius of the Norway lyre;
Or Swinburne—youngest of the princely band,
Sweeping the sea-strings with pathetic fire.
Least theirs, who've heard Orion's voice, divine,
Hurl from his antique heart one mighty line.

JOHN DUDLEY,

DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

An Historical Tragedy.

IN FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

EDWARD VI., *King of England.*
JOHN DUDLEY, EARL OF WARWICK, *Protector, and later, Duke of Northumberland.*
EDWARD SEYMOUR, DUKE OF SOMERSET, *uncle to the King, and formerly Protector.*
DUKE OF SUFFOLK, *father to Jane Dudley.*
EARL OF ARUNDEL.
LORD GUILDFORD DUDLEY, *son of John Dudley.*
SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON, *a Courtier.*
SIR ROBERT THROCKMORTON. } *Brothers.*
SIR HENRY THROCKMORTON, *an Artist.*
SIR JOHN GATES.
MONTAGUE, *Chief Justice and Privy Councillor.*
GARDINER, *Bishop of Winchester.*

Messengers, Envoys, and Citizens.

PRINCESS MARY, *daughter of Henry VIII., Heir-apparent.*
LADY JANE DUDLEY, *wife to Lord Guildford Dudley.*
DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK, *mother to Jane Dudley, granddaughter of Elizabeth Woodville.*
DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.
ISABEL, *a friend of Jane Dudley.*

JOHN DUDLEY,

DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Hampton Court. Garden.*

Enter KING EDWARD VI. *and the* DUKE OF SOMERSET.

EDWARD.

HOW fares the world with uncle Somerset ?
What care, I prithee, undermines thine heart ;—
Compels thy tranquil visage utter grief ;—
Making thine eyes mock our sick councillors ?
It frets me to confront a manly sorrow
Amid this pleasant summer-court of ours.

SOMERSET (*aside*).

If I reply: my recent banishment,
And spacious injuries huddled on with it,
He'll say I am most fully remedied
With other lands and titles—saving one
Which Warwick filched from me. If I unmask
The energy of such hate as gnaws my brain
To ventilate itself on haughty Warwick—
But these are truths which must not have a tongue.

[*To* EDWARD.

Some men of steadfast minds cannot preclude
Grief's counterfeit at Grief's antipodes.
My front was grievous at life's vestibule,
Though yet no woe of mine so fashioned it.

EDWARD.

I fear thy tongue dissembles, Somerset.
But little time, it seems, since joy's best self
Smiled finely from thy noble countenance;
When thou had'st soared up to a matchless height
About thy King, and peered else o'er all men;
Making thy seignory abridge us all.

Would Heaven, thou had'st not marred thine eyrie
there!

SOMERSET (*aside*).

His words are scorpions having twofold stings:
For I am fallen now on such a day
When all my stifled intents of revenge
Seem like to burst and conflagrate anew.

ATTENDANT.

So please your Majesty, the Earl of Warwick.

Enter WARWICK.

WARWICK.

My liege. A noble marshal is hard by
Bearing good things from France.

EDWARD.

Is it St. André?

WARWICK.

On Kingston Bridge I passed his following.
And this I bring the Duke of Somerset.

[*Giving a letter, which* SOMERSET *at once opens.*
The KING *retires to the garden.*

SOMERSET.

Here is some wisdom and much devilry.

[*To* WARWICK.

Who made thee France's envoy unto me?

WARWICK.

Methinks diskindness spoils thy gentle voice.

[EDWARD *appears, listening.*

SOMERSET.

In honest men is born a hate of craft.

WARWICK.

And do I not despise the crafty man?

SOMERSET.

Thy lips despise where thy false heart doth praise.
If friendly, thou had'st let another bring it;
But mischief lurks 'neath thy complacency,
Whence I would drag her forth before the world.

WARWICK (*sarcastically*).

Strange that the perfume did not quicken me.
How sharply hath it vexed thy sudden tongue!

[*More earnestly.*

As minister, adviser to the King,
I crave your favour to examine it,
And so make light your dainty eloquence.

SOMERSET.

Bait me not, Warwick: I have suffered so
That I distemper from too long endurance;
And thine impulsion may prove me infectious.

WARWICK.

By Samson! if I run upon your sword

[*They draw.*

I'll liberate the gist of this despatch.

[*Re-enter the* KING.

SOMERSET.

Now, swift, my sword,—hive thou in yon villain's heart,
And bring me back the honey of his life.

EDWARD.

What are ye at, Lord Warwick, Somerset?
I deemed your oppositions reconciled,

And, like true noblemen, ye would confront them;
Or there outgeneralled, yet spurn their remembrance.
What are ye at, I say? Are yours the minds
From which the King of England culls advice?
I wot the public eye must scorn ye both;
Which scorn ye do misconstrue admiration,
For that the people loose ye not their tongues.
What! shall your quarrels taint this amorous air,
And spread discomfort o'er this smiling heaven?
Lay bare the root of this your difference;
And henceforth such high passions do restrain:
For summer quarrels oft breed winter pain.

SOMERSET.

I who was once protector to the King,—
His uncle still, by his sweet mother's blood,—
I who o'er all am a true Englishman,
With all the imperfections one may boast
Claiming that name. By heaven, I say, can I
Forget the man who set a springe for me,
And in a dayless dungeon me withheld?
Robbed from me lands, all that my right possessed,—
The comforts of sweet home—the joys of peace—

The few loved things, Man, in this life, may have ;—
And gotten with much trouble ? I forget ?

WARWICK.

Did'st thou not slay thine own dear mother's son—
Poor Seymour, whose sweet blood shrieked up to heaven ?
I was much more his brother than thou wert.

EDWARD.

You, Warwick, are too anxious for your wit
When rightly occasion courts its strong restraint.
Something of this is wrinkled on thy brow.
And Somerset, thy prudence is not great,
Making thy woes a target for his wit,
Which silence would at once lift thee beyond.
Lend me that letter and give me your ear :
What Kings indite is meet for Kings to hear.

[THE KING *reads aloud.*

"I, Henry the Second, King of France, command you, Duke of Somerset, to abstain from further persecution of the Princess Mary on account of her faith. There be besides good Protestants good Catholics also. The peace of all religions is an harvest for

God. Therefore I pray that both of ye do your utmost to promote each other's welfare and the well-being of his most excellent Majesty."

He would erase my sister's path to heaven!
By Royalty! persuade her as before;
And straighten her all ways. Till she comply
Prison her priests and post some back to France.
'Tis my decree. I am the only King
Who is empowered to estimate this matter.

WARWICK.

Great Harry's spirit spake within thee then.
Adieu, high Somerset; my liege adieu. [*Aside.*
The Council, to a man, becomes his foe;
It will avenge me when I tell the tale.
[*Exit* WARWICK.

EDWARD.

See: yonder comes the French ambassador.
[*Exit the* KING.

SOMERSET (*alone*).

If all goes well (and I am assured it doth),
This very night shall that poor puppet-king

Tremble upon his throne. Then, my revenge,
Do thy sweet hest on Warwick. Oh ye clouds!
Muster your vagrant lightnings from the winds
And hurl the infuriate multitude on him.
Then, like a spout, let hell's profoundest fires
Commingle you in frantic tournament;
To utterly disroot his cursed race.
I have no pity, nor can I forgive.
Suffering hath long consumed my tolerance.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Well! what with thee?

MESSENGER.

Your Grace, it is not well.
The messenger to whom you did consign
Your last despatches is most foully slaughtered.
And from his corpse your letters were removed.

SOMERSET.

My letters were removed! Ah! say not so.
How was it done? Think you designedly:
Or done in confidence of their effects?

MESSENGER.

Tis thought he lived in debt, and some revenge
Of wrought-on creditors has served him thus.

SOMERSET.

Enquire if that be true.

MESSENGER.

I will, my lord.

SCENE II.—*London. A room in Durham House.*

Enter the EARL OF WARWICK.

WARWICK.

Somerset was once Protector to the King,
And I shut out his light. He still aspired.
Here was the knot which I to extricate
Matched my decision 'gainst his fitfulness,
And officered his blind precipitance
With my staid caution. Now I'll further—so :—
Either endure this obdurate dissension :
Be victim to his stinging fretfulness ;

Or do him the advancement to dispatch
His every vice post-haste unto the devil;
Leaving his virtues to dry-nurse the world.
Sweet Seymour's base declension shall be suited;
For in his death I lost an approved friend,
And oft his visage smiles at me in dreams.
I've whispered half the Council to my side;
So I'll envenom each one's aptitude,
That he'll suspect so odious an heart
In Somerset, as will wish him removed:—
Nay, envy the extractor of this thorn
Which festers in the hip of sovereignty:
But I will be the master-surgeon here.
Ambition seems to swallow my past sorrows
And gives me appetence to live this life;
Which, else, I've long disvalued.
For I have many instruments to weld;
By which the state-machine must so be fashioned
That I alone shall be the engineer,
And it shall answer me. Am I not right,
Having a life, to better it with deeds;
And post myself wherefore I am most fitted?
The man that doth not, is not worth Man's name.

[*Enter an Envoy.*

ENVOY.

My lord, here is the packet.

WARWICK.

Well done. Thou has been swift and to the purpose. I shall have many errands for thee. But what means this smear of blood?

ENVOY.

Oh! ask me not, my lord: ah! Heaven, it means the fullest, bloodiest, damned'st volume of woe that ever mortal dashed unmeaningly.

WARWICK.

Well, never mind, Man. I suppose there was resistance—eh?—

ENVOY.

My soul is sick to death with it. Ah! woe.

WARWICK.

Here is the recompense I promised you; 'tis wealth to you, being a poor man.

ENVOY.

I dare not, cannot have it in my hand, though 'twere a million pounds.

WARWICK.

What hast thou done to wear so changed an aspect? It cannot—

ENVOY.

My lord, I waited in the wood all night, and as the midnight hour came death-like on, I heard the gentle tramping of a horse. What grievous sounds foreran it! I urged my jade into the bitter gloom beneath a pine, to let it pass me by. I saw the rider, all muffled up, and, in his haviour, much resembling the man you did describe:—

WARWICK.

Well! out with it, Man. 'Twas not—

ENVOY.

Then, having passed, I made most sure 'twas he—the messenger.—I halloo'd him to stop. With that, he

spurred his horse, and I spurred mine; and though I have been wont to ride swift from childhood (for my father taught us quick accomplishment) he seemed the swifter, till, as we were got into the black wood's skirt, his beast slipped in the plush which the great rains had left. Here I attacked him, on foot; and for a few moments we grappled like lions. He could not find his knife, so muffled was he.—Would to God he had found it!—I struck him thrice with mine, till all his blood, like some vast bursting reservoir, rushed out at me, and so, convulsively, he fell away. I made a light to search for those despatches, and—God!—as the faint flame ran o'er his painful brow, I saw it was —my brother.

WARWICK.

Good fellow, still hold up. He must have known you. Why did he not speak? Had he some hate of you?

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Somerset House. A Banqueting Hall.* LORDS *and* LADIES *assembled. A great cheering.*

SOMERSET.

I thank ye all.

A GUEST.

Nay, we will have one more.
Our glasses are not empty of thy health;
And when they are, thus will we throw them down,
As testifying our true will to them
Who wish thee ill.

SOMERSET.

Most humbly do I thank ye.
Good Lords and Ladies, all assembled here,
Under our pleasant roof, ere we sit down,
I would apprize you how great matters stand:
The King, but lately strolling in his park,
In escort of the French Ambassador,
Was tempted to prolong the charming hours
To the chill breath of nightfall. Since that eve

He ceaselessly hath wrestled with affliction.
Now, in the dire event of his decease,
Mary, his sister, will possess the throne,
And for our firmness 'gainst her horrid faith,
Tyrant revenge will surely hunt us down.
I am informed Lord Warwick corresponds
With all her friends, to knit her to his side
By specious promises. Much lies herein.
Now is the hour when our intent is ripe.
This evening, Grey, with squadrons in the north,
Will occupy the marches. Thereupon,
We must incite vast revolution here:
And prison Warwick ere he apprehends.
Therefore, good friends, the contract we have forged,
Let us forge doubly: for in Unity
The soul of much consists: no strength without.
Now to your healths. All will be well.

[SOMERSET *raises his flagon to drink, when a great clamour from without causes all the guests to rise hurriedly.*

Maitland, make fast the door. What now? who quarrel there?

[*Enter an armed troop, headed by a colonel.*

COLONEL.

I do arrest thee, Duke of Somerset, in the King's name and the good Earl Warwick's, for compassing, by divers hateful means, the lives of many good and faithful subjects: among whose, that of the aforesaid Earl of Warwick.

SOMERSET.

Is it some lightning stroke from hell below?
Or some—Impossible!—My child! My wife!
It cannot be; I say.

COLONEL.

Your Grace, 'tis true.

SOMERSET.

Oh! help me, friends; will all of ye look on?

A VOICE.

We have no arms, my lord.

[*The soldiers raise their arms as if to threaten.*

SOMERSET.

Oh! damned Excuse,
How swift are fickle hearts to follow thee

In thy bye-ways and honour-soiling slums;
Instead of pushing to the wholesome truth,
And out of darkness shaping a daylight!
Arms or no arms, had I been one of ye
I would have hounded out these myrmidons,
Though Peril thundered at me to desist.
My pity, friends! I do resign myself
Unto your charge, most gallant colonel:
For better safety lies with enemies
Than in thrice-bitter treachery of friends.

[*Exit* SOMERSET, *guarded.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Kenninghall Park. Evening.*

The PRINCESS MARY (*alone*).

MARY.

Time's virtuous hand cures not my aching hurts.
Once did I think that Somerset being dead,
All base oppression was laid in its grave.
Then might I court an unproclaimed quiet—
But yet I bore no grudge. Poor man, he died
As warped in action as he proved in thought;
And ne'er sucked in one drop of tolerance.
Now others ministrate his offices
With like enforcement. Still, my resolute friends,—
My sweet, tried friends do parcel out my troubles,
And each sustains more than his lawful load;
While little deeds betray their several loves.

But now I will unloose these cheerless thoughts,
And in bright nature seek some betterment
For my lost courage. See: how spread the stars!
A stormy sunfall glimmers through the trees:—
These immemorial oaks, whose reverend hands
Sway solemnly across the witching wind,
As though they would smooth down the brow of heaven:
And beckon earthwards winged tranquillity.

[*A pause.*

Lo! who comes there with so light-hearted tread?

[*Enter* SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

Sir Nicholas, what wafts thee here again?
If some extortionate dealing as that last;
Prithee be silent; and return unanswered.

SIR NICHOLAS.

Fair news, I bring your Royal Highness.

MARY.

News?
Thou bring'st fair news? I long to hear thee speak,
And mark the shape thy nether lip assumes.
Sweet phrase may yet excuse unwelcome presence.

SIR NICHOLAS.

King Edward, lady, greatly favours thee,
And bodies-forth his greeting in these presents,
With Hertford Castle as new residence.
Warwick is made Duke of Northumberland,
And doth all times accompany his King,
Who calls him Saviour: and to him pertains
What once was to the fallen Somerset.
He likewise renders homage to your Highness.

MARY (*aside*).

Who, wise, dare trust such mutability?—
Yet will I fling all doubt away from me.
Give them my thanks; nay! give them both my love.
But is there more?

SIR NICHOLAS.

Aye! Aye! the most of all.
Thy cousin, sweet Jane Grey, at noon is married.

MARY.

To whom? She is too fair for most of ye.

SIR NICHOLAS.

Unto Lord Guildford Dudley—the Duke's son.

MARY.

In faith, a noble union. If that son
Hath half the wit his father hath in charge,
The intellect to come may prove a fool.

SIR NICHOLAS.

'Tis said that Fortune woos Northumberland,
For where he looks there breathes Prosperity.

MARY.

Then, by my faith, may he look frequent here!
Take thou this chain and clasp it round Jane's neck;
And say her cousin Mary bids good speed.
Then privily give this Northumberland,
In token of my confidence. Tell him
It is my portrait prankt with brilliants,
Each one of which, though purer than ourselves,
Perchance bespeaks the lady it enshrines.
If trouble should abase him any time,
Why, bid him bring it me; and I will help him.
Provide thyself good cheer from my estate,
And with this ring I do reward thy pains;
Which, though it hath not stone nor ornament,
Will conjure sunshine to thy marriage-bed.

SIR NICHOLAS.

It were a pretty gift from anyone.
But beauty and such sweetness giving it,
Methinks might make e'en an immortal vain.

MARY.

A master-artist thou in compliments.
Adieu! Sir Nicholas, adieu!

[*Exit* SIR NICHOLAS.

How sudden come the answers to our prayers!
For I was near the extreme brink of Hope,
But little since: and now some fairy hand
Has snatched me from the dark yawn of Despair,
And sealed sweet friendship with Northumberland.
The King of France shall have my thanks for it,
It is none else but he.

SCENE II.—*Durham House. Strand. Evening. An Hall. Marriage Festivities.*

LADY JANE DUDLEY *and* LORD GUILDFORD DUDLEY.

JANE.

Let us first visit Groby, Guildford! I love the

dear old place: it has such ancient trees; and I have planted many little ones which, some day, will grow great and beautiful. A purling brook from the dark forest, like a weird spirit, pours itself among their ravelled roots—the home of the kingfisher. Guildford, beneath their shade, two things for which thou lovest me I won: for in their figure did I read the full-blown fate of Man. There all his times are writ: the budding beauty of his infancy: his youthfull vigour and sad falling-off; all while the bounteous breeze, laden with healthy fragrance, made what of magic thou pretend'st I have. Let us go there, I prithee: For what I love, thou lovest.

GUILDFORD.

There's not a blade, Love, 'mid the twinkling grass,
But after thou hast pressed it prone to earth,
Doth re-arise to smile on thee again:
And where thy dear eyes turn, Earth's loveliest thoughts
Like little birds, flit in at thy soul's windows;
Upon mine ear my heart has set a bar,
No thought may enter but it breathes of thee;—

But, being of thee, that bar straight vanisheth;
Its walls are glad to welcome that thought in.
Only, in this, ere thou mak'st sweet resolve,
I prithee, list my father's counselling.

JANE.

Could he persuade thee to oppose thy Love?
Let Opposition come of thee alone:
For I will woo her, if she comes from thee,
Bathed in the music of my Love's own voice.
But look who comes.

Enter SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

GUILDFORD.

What hath so winged thy feet?
It was but yesterday thou wentest hence.

SIR NICHOLAS.

My reckoning limped here on both legs, my Lord;
Or I had nudged your wedding-sleeve this morning.

GUILDFORD (*half-aside*).

There might not have been room for such as thou.

JANE.

Dear Guildford, he hath meant no sort of harm.

GUILDFORD.

I do detest polite impertinence.

SIR NICHOLAS (*with affected gravity*).

The gifts of a princess can thread their way
Though beggar-borne amid great noblemen;
Such is the magic awe of Royalty.

GUILDFORD.

Dost thou bear gifts?

SIR NICHOLAS.

Aye, aye, my Lord, I do.

GUILDFORD.

Aye! Well, be swift.

JANE.

Guildford, there is no haste.

SIR NICHOLAS.

The Princess Mary sends her cousin, love:
And ardently, my Lord, she breathed your welfare.
[*To* JANE.
She also bade me clasp this round thy neck.

JANE.

And this do thou for bringing it so well.
[SIR NICHOLAS *places the necklace on* JANE.

GUILDFORD (*aside*).

This courting knave need never sue my favour.
Will he pollute her with his mocking hands?

SIR NICHOLAS.

Such gems but seem paid courtiers round their queen;
Or modest daisies cincturing a rose.

JANE.

We shall not die for lack of compliments.
What does my Guildford say?—why, Love! what—

Enter the DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND (*in magnificent attire*).

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What ho! Sir Nicholas!
Did'st thou deliver all our messages?

[*Exit* JANE *and* LORD GUILDFORD.

SIR NICHOLAS.

I did, your Grace, and others have brought back.
Albeit to thee I am bound privily.
With this rich portrait doth she greet your Grace:
And, should rough contraries ere cross your heart,
To the extremest limits of her power
Will she assist you, so you but convey
This friendly token by some mutual hand.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

A generous woman is a friend, indeed.
I never hope but mere humanity,
A cold "God help you" or "poor fellow," so.

[*Aside.*

This almost disconcerts my deep intent.

[*Half-aside.*

How oft when we suspect our friends of ill,
For us they are imagining fair deeds!

SIR NICHOLAS.

And vindicating ill-acquaintances,
How oft 'tis shown we err in kindliness!

[*Exit* SIR NICHOLAS.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Ha! ha! 'tis true. I have oft seen that true.

Re-enter JANE.

JANE.

Knit not those smooth, white brows, Northumberland; nor look perplexed. But tell me why thou dost wish us to remain in London: for I verily tell thee that all our thoughts, save those of our dear parents, are distantly removed. We have already fixed upon Bradgate—the scene of my sweet childhood—sweet with how many sorrows.—But Guildford bade me ask your counselling.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Why, Jane, thou would'st not lay a stumbling-block in thy husband's path!

JANE.

Oh! How should I do this thing?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Know'st thou not the extreme favour I hold with the King, who doubtless, for my sake, intends to honour Guildford?

JANE.

But Honour can fly round the earth, like the wind, and needs no man to linger at her door.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

But, my sweet Jane, the King will wish your presences in town; and you will find long journeys troublesome.

JANE.

'Tis very delicately thought of you. We will remain in London until the King recovers; and then ——

NORTHUMBERLAND.

My Jane, 'tis but a simple thought, kindly expressed. Let us go into the garden, and talk of

every sweet that is to come. The night is full of stars; look how they shine!—but here is one shines more than all of them. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter SIR NICHOLAS.

SIR NICHOLAS.

"This almost—disconcerts—my deep—intent." So did he say; and said it perhaps a little too loud. But times are critical; the King is sorrily afflicted; I am seemingly despised of nearly all: which is a strange thing. I'll keep an extra pair of diplomatic eyes, and watch the disconcerting of this deep intent.

SCENE III.—*The same. Northumberland's Library. Later.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Now doth King Edward sicken unto death—
A puny boy: and yet well-favoured lad.
Scarce sixteen summers ripe, so to give o'er
And to accept an higher sovereignty
Is the marked favour of the Deity.

For by King Harry's will it is decreed,
That if this Edward dieth issueless,
Then shall his sister Mary be enthroned :—
Priest-ridden, gentle Mary. But, I ween,
The hearts of dying men are quick of change,
Feeling, not memory, controls their acts:
So, ere he dies, I'll comfort his bedside,
And lip that wisdom in his plastic ear,
By the which means, he will with joy direct
To make sweet Lady Jane, my dear son's wife,
The sanctioned heiress to the English throne.
What use were it to be Northumberland?
For this I've tripped up my small enemies;
For this I felled the tree of Somerset;
For this I would do battle with the clouds,
And not confess defeat until they slew me.
Oh! favour, Fortune; and ye sweet blue skies
Light kindly on Northumberland this night!
Yet, in the converse, should ill-destiny
Spread forth her baleful wings above our house,
And brood endamagement—aye, should it hap
That Mary takes the field with victory,
Small charity need we await from her:

So in one stroke I must secure her person;
Which being the key-brick of my fabrication,
All clings by this, and in its giving way,
I and my fabric fall behind the day.

[*Sits down and writes.*

What ho! whence come you?

MESSENGER.

Sirrah! from the King,
Who wills your Grace to comfort his bedside.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Go: tell the King, I will be there anon.

[*Exit* MESSENGER.

Reading aloud.]

"The King your gracious brother, being grievously afflicted, prays your attendance, madam. Receiving this, haste hither."

Enter LACQUEY.

Let this be sent with speed.

[*Exit* LACQUEY.

Soon will the prospect clear. How sweet it is,
To embark on an argument forearmed,

Assured of triumph o'er an obdurate foe!
The King is dying: do I love the King?
Diviner is the sun which we are losing:
Above our heads, we love him scarce at all.
'Tis nearly midnight. Aye!
Stay: let me look.

[*Holds aside a curtain in the wall.*

Oh! gentle Sleep, how sweetly dost thou lean
Upon the unwrinkled beauty-brows of youth!
There lie the loveliest nurslings of the earth,
Locked in each other's arms, like twin young stars
Dreaming upon the bosom of the sky.
Not one small care have they: for sweet is Love,
In banishing unwelcome things. List to her breath!
No angel could breathe softer in the motion
Of his angelic wing that cleaves the light:
Nor is the wavering of a melilot
More audible than her warm heart that beats
Unto the amour of her gentle lord.
Ah! well-a-day. The world will treat them well.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*The Palace.* KING EDWARD *sleeping in a chair.* NORTHUMBERLAND *in abjection pacing to and fro. Lightning occasionally.*

EDWARD (*awaking*).

Oh! are you here, dear, good Northumberland?
A little sleep hath done me a great good:
I do not fear death now.

NORTHUMBERLAND (*sighing*).

My gracious liege,
It is a fearful night. The things of hell
Seem sporting in the trembling atmosphere.

EDWARD.

But what doth hang so heavy on thine heart?
To-night you're married to a Melancholy.
Thy wife should be vast Jealousy herself.
Hide not thy face; but let me be aware.
For Friendship's essence doth in this consist,—
The opening of the flood-gates of the heart,
Where joy and grief rush equally combined
Into the middle river of affection.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Sweet Prince, their burthen thou can'st least support.

EDWARD.

While thou dost cloak them, I am less at ease.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The future gives me grave disquietude.

EDWARD.

Why, thou art rich and need'st not health nor strength.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Nay, my sweet Prince, not of myself I speak,
But of this kingdom, that will thee beweep.

EDWARD.

Therein myself doth see but little dread.
It is a noble kingdom.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Sire, whose shall it be ?

EDWARD.

That is resolved by my great father's will.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Nothing is worthy till 'tis three times changed:
Had he survived a little longer here,
Great Harry had seen fit to change his will.

EDWARD.

Why, you amaze me. 'Twere impossible!
Men of such minds, as his, do never change
Decisions once matured; that were to make
The difference 'twixt great and little minds
Of no account; and to aver the sparrow,
That frightens at the motion of a twig,
To be as dauntless as the fleet ger-falcon,
That spoils the tardy hunter of his prey.
Nay! Harry was no sparrow.

NORTHUMBERLAND (*aside*).

Though each year
He had a fresh espousal. [*To* EDWARD.
As I slept,
[*Music softly from a back chamber.*
I dreamed thy sister Mary was enthroned;
Troubling the beauty of this lovely land

With a fierce rod that gleamed a bright blood-red,
As the sun fell across her fearful throne;
And all thy people quivered at her feet
Like timorous dogs, in terror of her speech.
There as I stood, I heard soul-sickening groans,
That seemed to freeze the sweet use of mine ears,
Proceeding from a grassy lawn without;
Where a grim headsman on a sable stage
Flouted red horrors toward the piteous skies;
And in the cross-beams of the scaffolding,
A gentle swallow wove her hermitage,
Unfrighted by the frequent business there;
For summer was the season of my dream.
Ladies of beauty and rank were numberless,
Who passed beneath the executioner;
And neither man nor God dared interpose.

EDWARD.

What was the cause for which it seemed they fell?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The Reformation, that most glorious deed
Of thy great father, Harry, was undone.

[*The storm is heard at quick intervals.*

The flood of our God's strength was rolled away,
And horrid Papacy had crept in place,
Like a vast serpent, filling up the room
Where once the living waters sparkled on.
And all the beauty of thy noble acts,
Fair Edward, and thy father's, was defiled.
Oh! what an horror griped me so to find
Matters ill-changed, and by a woman's hand!
Brother gave brother to her bloody maw:
Father gave son: and mothers, wives, and all,
Betrayed each other. [*Music to cease.*

EDWARD (*agitated.*)

Just as it is in Spain.
Hark at the pitiless storm! Oh, how it raves!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Then say: what think'st thou? was't a swaggering dream?

[*Handing the King a letter.*

EDWARD (*reading aloud*).

"So, dearest, most beloved Mary, God willing and our papal father, we will unite our kingdoms and found a noble empire. Conceal thy hate for the vile

Protestants. Their ways are noted in our books ; and I have many clever intellects that in their deepest runs will ferret them. My friends here tell me their work is on the decline, and the Deity angers for want of more incense.

"Your devoted,

"PHILIP."

This is his writing, cramped and pitiless.
Ah ! horrible, my father's work unmade !—
Is this to be ?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Alas ! thus will it be.
The noble monuments reared o'er dead men
Soon themselves sink and crush them in their graves.
No better prop is this of man's device,
Than any else he leans his hope upon.
All, all are temporal. Yea ! but established,
Canker and Damp at once divide the work—
Those vultures of the carcase of our fame.

EDWARD.

Oh ! say not so : this is too hard to bear.

My last, sole wish is for the Faith of God,
To which my failing strength is all applied.
This storm is killing me, Northumberland,
I grow afeared.

NORTHUMBERLAND (*coldly*).

Thus will things be, I trow.
There is alone one lawful mode of change
By which—

EDWARD.

Oh! dear Northumberland, God-gifted man,
Do harp its music to my care-worn heart,
That hangs—a blanched rose in my shivering breast.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Why, change the tenour of thy father's will:
Thou art an absolute king, and may'st adapt
Old subtleties to present circumstance.
Thy father wrote, "No Catholic shall rule"
Now thou hast warranty of Mary's right
Wholly forlorn through her pert waywardness.

EDWARD.

Elizabeth is not a Catholic.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Think you this people will have bastard-queens ?
There's not one soul in England will consent.
It were to desecrate all majesty,
Authority's supreme head being subdued
By Nature's fraudulence. It must not be,
Contempt would rightly dissemble reverence ;
And admiration simulate disdain,
Had we for monarchs, whose nativities
Flaunt their begetter, "Slave to appetite."
My liege, I do grow fretful with much cause ;
Seeing in you such saintlike blamelessness.

EDWARD.

Then who beside hath any fit pretension ?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Why, surely the most noble wife of Suffolk
Is from the fourth Edward by pure lineage.
She hath a daughter—the fair Lady Jane,
Your royal cousin—in all things approved.

EDWARD.

Bring me the will ; and bring my seals with it.

Oh! had I died in such dread ignorance,

[*Exit* NORTHUMBERLAND.

Then had my body writhed within my grave.
Thus dying men sow broadcast seeds of strife,
That flower into life-long enmities;
And sign the warrant for a thousand sins. [*A pause.*

[*Re-enter* NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

[*Music.*

Thou art dispenser of thy people's peace,
And in this deed embracest their affections.

EDWARD.

Here is my signature: do thou the rest,
And make the council to one mind with us.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Now is the wisdom of great Solomon
An hundred times increased in thee, my king.

EDWARD.

I would now sleep; adieu, Northumberland.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Edward, may the soon-awakening sun
Weave lovely rainbows in thy world of dreams!
Adieu! sweet Prince, adieu! adieu!

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*London. Council and Magistrates.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The King requests your seals and signatures
To this grave instrument; whereby the realm
May steel itself 'gainst an unhallowed rule;
Which, like a grim and fearful sentry wolf,
Whose eyes are beacons in the pitchy night
That gathers round our throne, stalks to and fro,
Eager for slaughter till itself be slain.
Here is the deed. I wait your loyalty.

A VOICE.

Who is the wolf, and what compels that night?

MONTAGUE.

We entreat time for due advertency.
To finger this grave business suddenly
Were to unbalance justice and the realm;

To make wrong right and right kneel down to wrong;
To warrant thieves with royal seals to steal:
To court disorder: to commit good men,
And ravage eras in a single day.
Besides, no man to such a deed accords,
But blurting Treason, with a harlot's wink,
In him her ensconced self doth advertise,
Harnessed to hatch a thousand miseries.

NORTHUMBERLAND (*ragefully*).

Damned traitor! wilt thou lie unto my face?
The foulest torments eat into thy bones,
And rend thee nerve by nerve until thou diest
The fulsome death thou dost so well deserve!
With thy cursed saws and wordy epithets,
Montague, thou art duplicity itself;
Whose bloodless tongue shames not to forge quick lies:
Therefore I will ring changes on thy death,
Until hell's angels rise to bid me cease.

MONTAGUE (*retreating*).

Spare me such words, I pray your Grace.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Nay! nay! if I sting not your swinish bodies,
I'll thresh ye in the whirlwind of my words.
O! ye are traitors, every one of ye—
Foul, stinking parts that make a whole corruption!

MONTAGUE (*to a Councillor*).

It is some fit of frenzy in his Grace.
The gravity of long-endured cares
Doth brand it deep in his delirious brain,
Conjuring images of wild import;
When, rightlier peaceful reason should reign there.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I'll rend ye bone from bone—yea! all of ye,
If by this eve your manners be unchanged.
I thought ye loyalty itself till now.

A COUNCILLOR.

Your Grace: we will do anything most hard,
Will you but let us rest within your favour.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Then sign this, man; or, by the Heaven above,
Ye shall be changed for better councillors.

A COUNCILLOR.

I do attach my signature.

ANOTHER.

And I.

[*They all sign, and last of all* MONTAGUE.

MONTAGUE.

I do unwillingly, and—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And who is he?

[*Exeunt one by one, bowing.*

I thank ye all. Come, my Lord Arundel,
Let us enjoy a moment on the river.
My ceaseless toil hath so much flurried me
That I scarce know to speak advisedly.

ARUNDEL.

Your Grace speaks always boldly and right well.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Throckmorton House.*

SIR ROBERT THROCKMORTON.

(*Entering an empty studio, he contemplates a painting.*)

Who may this lady be? Would Heaven I knew't!
Smooth brows arch whitely 'neath her wandering hair,
And steadfast eyes of sadness and rare sweet;
As got with light of Spring on Autumn's breath.
Angels might kiss them, deeming them their own;
Cheeks, softened with delight of tender love;
The corners of whose lips shadow strange jewels,
Like dusky lilies wove with dainty leaves.
Sorrow here wreathes her limbs round loveliness
And loses chief herself in sheer delight.
Look how that hand, as new from Nature's factory,
Folds a faint rose, as 'twas ordainèd for
Sweet spring bursts forth behind. Gay creepers climb
Apparelling the pillars at her side;
And the blue heaven smiles proudly from above.

Why, Henry, who is this thou dost portray
With such persuasion?

SIR HENRY THROCKMORTON.

My Lady Jane it is.
I pray you 'tis unfinished. Look no more.
'Tis but such forgery of that angel's self
As wears unmasterly similitude.

SIR ROBERT THROCKMORTON.

Nay! my Lord Guildford's wife! nay! it hath life,
And must be like: for I have never seen
So beautiful a thing in woman.

SIR HENRY THROCKMORTON.

(*Aside.*) Alas! she is Lord Dudley's, and not mine.
[*Enter* SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

I am purveyor of sad news to ye.
The day which yet was day is turned to night.
The King is dead: King Edward is no more.

SIR ROBERT THROCKMORTON.

Dead! Dead! Good God! this is too soon to die.

SIR HENRY THROCKMORTON.

Your lips are pregnant with more things than this.
How died he? When? Of what?

SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

The wind has voiced me something more than this;
Jane Dudley soon will be proclaimèd—Queen.
[*Pointing to the picture.*

SIR HENRY THROCKMORTON.

Impossible!

SIR ROBERT THROCKMORTON.

She cannot be made queen:
The Princess Mary and Elizabeth—

SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

Northumberland prevailed so on the King,
That he, while dying, warped from its true drift
The general tenour of his father's will,
Sans all consent, in favour of his cousin;

While Princess Mary hither he entices,
To mew her royal person in the Tower.
To-morrow by this hour there will she be.
Close prisoner to ambitious tyranny.

SIR ROBERT THROCKMORTON.

Is she not warned?

SIR HENRY THROCKMORTON.

Alas! How should she be?

SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

Brother, know you a trusty messenger?
You once made mention of such man to me—
An honest dealer in quaint ornaments.

SIR ROBERT THROCKMORTON.

Why, there's the goldsmith: that's the very man.

SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

Will he ensure great speed and secrecy?

SIR HENRY THROCKMORTON.

Certes! he will do anything we need.

SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

What shall I give him as a recompense?

SIR ROBERT THROCKMORTON.

Be not ashamed to give the poor man money,
If you would reap the first-fruits of his love.

SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

Nay! but he is a goldsmith. Is he not?

SIR HENRY THROCKMORTON.

Aye! but his trade yields him but pompous copper.
Though, if I judge his kindly eye aright
A heart of gold is beating 'neath his shirt.

SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

Let us at once to him: I'll gage my life
An Mary proves not conqueror in the strife.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Durham House. Lords of Council, Lord Mayor, and Aldermen.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Since fortune clearly shows her on our side,
Good Lords (as 'tis most meet she should so show,
For that a most fair lady is involved,
Whose shadow is more bright than Fortune's glow),
Let us make good our private words with deeds
Up to extremity; that here behind,
No thought may be without strong action there.
For, by mine honour, all of us are men—
Some of renown; but none unworthily:
And no man of renown will waste fair words.
Talk lasts for ever. Action done is done.
So in my mind most clearly is disposed
That you, Lord Clinton, do command the Tower,
With its munitions, treasures, prisoners;
That you, Lord Mayor and Civic Aldermen,
Do bind yourselves in due allegiance
Unto your new and gracious sovereign;
And then, with greater joy for your great grief,

Resume your grave vocations as before.
Northampton, Pembroke, and Lord Huntingdon,
We will unto our sovereign Lady Jane,
And now present her our acknowledgments.

[*Exeunt with flourish.*

SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON (*aside*).

A fool, when he hath spoken, hath done all.

SCENE IV.—*Evening. An Inn, Hunsdon, near London.*

Enter PRINCESS MARY *and* LADIES ATTENDANT.

MARY.

No moment must be lost: he is so ill
For every breath I draw he loses one.
Let us take carriage; sirrah!—who comes here?—
A man in opposition to the wind,

[*Advancing to a coach.*

With all his locks abroad, like flowing snakes;
And sinews strained to wondrous prominence.

A MESSENGER (*running in*).

Madam! a moment stay!

MARY.

Not though my life depended on the moment.

MESSENGER.

Madam! your life does hang upon this minute.

MARY.

Then speak, man, quickly, or we leave thee here
Gaping upon the dull rain-stricken air.

MESSENGER.

My liege, Sir Nicholas bade me post hither
To warn you that your brother is deceased,
And men contrive in divers ill deceits,
Hiding his death from public ears till now,
With purpose to insnare your Majesty.
But yester morn two lads were clipt o' th' ears
For brawling in the streets, "The King is dead."

MARY.

How, man? Art mad? How should it be?
(*Aside.*) I was most friendly with Northumberland:
Scarcely becomes it him thus to deceive me.
Truly, how know you that the King is dead?

MESSENGER.

Sir Nicholas most truly told me so;
Lord Arundel hath whispered it to me.

MARY (*in great agitation*).

What shall I do? I scarce dare trust his word,
Nicholas might plot. Would Robert had sent thee!

MESSENGER.

Sir Robert, too, was present with them both.

MARY.

Then it is but too true. O, what a world!
The ivy kindly clothes what it will kill.
These are the winter snowfalls on our hearts,
That freeze the trustful flowers of affection
And harden-up the currents of our life.
Will he attempt our brother's throne, himself;
Because he swayed the hearth-rug of the King?
The man might just as well sit down to eat
A nest of venomed ants: or pluck the stars.
He thinks me sickly, and misliking faction,
For that I brooked fraternal bigotry;

But the whole world shall ring with my just cause.
Ill bodies are maintained designedly
To hit the mean 'twixt use and worthlessness.
So would this crafty man, Northumberland,
Keep me for his own covert purposes :—
Make me his creature : ply me at his will.
But tread, how you will, upon the noble mind,
It will arise when you have passed away.
Now light breaks on me : God, be thou my help !
As England's child, I'll prove a lion's whelp.

[*To the Attendants.*

We will not go to London. Turn aside,
And make for Kenninghall : give us good speed.

[*To the Messenger.*

Here, man ! take this ; and pray thou for our welfare.

MESSENGER.

May Heaven preserve your gentle Majesty.

[*Kisses the* QUEEN'S *hand.*] [*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE V.—*Sion House and Garden.*

Enter JANE DUDLEY *and a* FRIEND.

ISABEL.

Sweet Jane, I prithee tell me of this flower:
I found it lying plucked upon the grass;
And all around it fairer flowers lay strown:—
Swallow-wort, and bell-flowers, and blithe asphodel;
And orchis, fit for beauty-bees to love:—
Roses, and all sweet prevailing flowers
That dream upon the velvet breast of night,
But none so charmed my fancy as this one.

JANE.

Why, child, it is the famous mandrake root;
Of which, 'tis said, if from its parent earth
Man's hand withdraws it, a sharp sob is heard;
And thenceforth luck forsakes who drew it thence.

ISABEL.

Then am I glad I drew it not, nor thou.

JANE.

Sweet child, dost thou rejoice because of me?

ISABEL.

Why, Jane, I love thee with my whole, whole heart,
And hadst thou gleaned the grievous root thyself,
I'd sue another to be even with thee.

JANE.

Sweet one! indeed, why dost thou love me so?

ISABEL.

Because you love all things which I do love;—
And then you are so beautiful.

JANE.

Alas! dear child, Beauty stays but a while:—
[*Throws away the mandrake.*
A dainty rose that may not linger long:—
A violet enamoured of the winds,
That's better plucked than left to wane away.

ISABEL.

Dear Jane, you'll never be less beautiful:
No, not at seventy. You are like those gems—

Winged opals that bestride the summer air,
The fondlings of the flower-palaces ;
Upon whose limbs, God's secrets are engraved,
Glowing in beauty ; that return to him.

JANE.

Think you so, my sweet ?
It may be that thine angel-lips make true
What from another's I might scarce believe.

ISABEL.

Shall we have music this evening as last eve ?
I love the viols and their tender sighs ;
They seem to waft my heart right up to heaven.

JANE.

I love to hear you talk of music, so.
Just as the ardent sun unclasps the flowers,
So music openeth the mortal heart,
And doth infuse a subtle, soothing balm,
Till inly we expand, and spirit-like,
See good and beauty in all things around.
It is the truest medicine on the earth, Love.

ISABEL.

Hark at the sweet birds! Lo! the sun is down;
And the soft odours of the summer flowers
Loosed by the twilight, sweep the deepening hours.
A voice doth call thee, Jane.

JANE.

Adieu! sweet one; it is my Lord's own voice.

ISABEL.

But thou wilt come again, and list with me
These charming nightingales!

JANE.

I will, sweet one.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*Sion House. A Chamber of State.*

Enter GUILDFORD DUDLEY, NORTHUMBERLAND, DUKE OF SUFFOLK *and his* DUCHESS, *and* JANE DUDLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND (*to* LADY JANE).

Never the sun created fairer day,
And never the stars shone as they shine this night.

JANE.

Your Grace speaks marvellous strange.

GUILDFORD.

But 'tis the truth.

JANE.

Why, Guildford, do all these come here to-day?
Thou said'st, this morning, we should spend alone
The promised loveliness of this sweet eve.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Fair lady, we come humbly to make known

The pleasure of our late-deceased King
Unto your gracious self.

JANE.

Is Edward dead?
Why have ye never told me he was dead?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

He makes thee sovereign of the realm he leaves;
And bids us, as we love him, thee enthrone
Upon his royal seat. Therefore, fair Jane,
In due obeisance and humility,
Do we approach thee as our rightful Queen;
And to thy service dedicate our love.

JANE.

Impossible! and if all this be true,
I do reject it; and will none of it.
I marvel where my cousin Mary is:
She is not dead, nor is Elizabeth.
These are your sovereigns: do your homage there.
All else usurp: as conscience speaks, I hear.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Therein thy wisdom shows pre-eminent.

These two were heirs until our much-grieved King
Forewarned his father's work would be undone,
Discovering them bastards, changed his will,
And made the House of Suffolk his true heirs,
To the delight of all wise men and good.

JANE.

Think you to add a pleasure to my life
By crowning me? Oh! no; think you not so.
As well might you weave hoarfrost in my hair,
And chill my blood by other means as this.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Hallowed distinction has no charm for you.

JANE.

Things that we hope are pleasurably found;
But what we love not comes to us amiss.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Twice such occasion offers to no mortal.

JANE.

And, if twice offered me, 'twere twice refused.

DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK.

I thought not to have borne the world a fool.

JANE.

My mother chides me justly in her pride;
But why doth herself refuse the proffered crown?
Will it not grace her silver brows as well
As mine? though mine, indeed, it will make pale.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The king expressly hath your name inscribed,—
Not in oblivion of your noble mother;
But from his own divine, deep-seeing will.

JANE.

His mind was never used to be so strange;
And many arguments must have been waged,
Before so marvellous a change was wrought.

SUFFOLK.

Of that, we know not; only this we know:—
The Council with the citizens accord,
Who wish thee well.

JANE.

Ah! me, what shall I say?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Therefore we kneel before thee as our Queen,
And in this people's name acknowledge thee.

JANE.

And is the love I lavished thus repelled,—
—So seemingly rejoiced in? Can it be
That they the ones of all most cherished here,—
For whom, each one, I would lay down my life,—
Would sacrifice me for mere lust of gain?
Oh! no. My love prevents such dark belief.
Northumberland, once more I tell thee, nay!
Fortune, the fickle phantom of our life,
Who shadows ruin with her joyful wings,
And makes its shattered walls echo her laugh,
I will not trust. How shall good blossom forth
Beneath a crown torn ruthlessly away
From Catherine of Aragon,—Bulleyn,—
And lovelinesses else in swift succession?
Would it please ye my blood should flow like theirs?

Like theirs should stain the sweet and joyous earth
That from their slaughters hath but late recovered?
I will not lengthen out that fatal scroll.

NORTHUMBERLAND (*aside*).

Hell's furies seize us all! we shall be lost.

DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK.

The churlish child! Here is our punishment.
She doth affect the wisdom that she hath not,
And works the unwilling thread to her objection.
What! shall the house of Suffolk be cut off
For a mere fool? Then Age, Experience,
In future kneel before the babes ye bear,
And supplicate ripe judgments from mere bratlings.

GUILDFORD.

But Fortune might prove Constancy herself,
With such a consort as my Lady Jane.

JANE (*aside*).

And Guildford's lips,—the lips of my own soul,—

Could they become the instruments of ill
To me? Could they speak false? Heaven look to me!
Can'st thou not see the thorns, Love, on that path?

GUILDFORD.

They cannot kill.

JANE.

Yet trip me to my hurt.
Sometimes the brain is better killed outright,
Than left to linger in contagious pain.
Would ye expose me to the desperate test
Of hurricanes on a frail pinnacle,
That of itself will fall, and falling kill
Both ye and me? I pray of ye, once more,
Desist; and leave me still your Lady Jane,
If ye do value happiness. Guildford!—(*Despairingly*).
[*They arise and pretend departure.*

GUILDFORD.

Sweet Jane!—

Since all our lives do hang upon thy lips ;
By our most sacred love, I do beseech thee. [*Kneeling.*

DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK.

Obstinate child, no good can come of this.
Thy sister shall be Queen if thou wilt not :
For on this moment haply the future hangs ;
And fortune, love, and life are breasted there.
Thou wilt repent it when thy folly turns.

[*A chapel door opens at the back of the stage, showing the altar and decorations.*

GUILDFORD.

Lo ! here they come to crown thee. [*A pause.*

JANE.

I consent.

SUFFOLK.

Ah ! that is like yourself, my dearest child.

[*They all kneel. Organ-music and voices.*

JANE (*kneeling.*)

Ah ! Heaven, if ever prayer hath entered thee,
Guide me aright, and send us all sweet peace.

My God, I love thee. Hear thy suppliant child!
The world's a darkened curtain o'er mine eyes;
And thou sole star that piercest through its gloom;
And all its clouds are but fantastic fretwork
Through which the harmonies of prayer and praise
Float soft and sweet into thy friendly ear.
O, hear me; guide me; gentle Saviour.

[*They arise, and enter the chapel.*

NORTHUMBERLAND (*aside*).

Jane, by the grace of God!

[*Bending his knee, and kissing his sword.*

Chorus of children's voices, and chorus of men and virgins.

1ST CHORUS.

Strew we sweet blossoms and beautiful flowers in her paths. For, like the tender dayspring, doth the face of our new queen lighten upon us.

2ND CHORUS.

Faithful and pure are her ways, and filled with grace. Life, in its splendour and loveliness, sings in her motions.

IST CHORUS.

May fortune and happiness ever breathe in her doings.

2ND CHORUS.

Till the All-seeing—the Divine, draws her from us into the azure, blossoming with golden stars, where the angels alone have dwelling.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Tower. Enter the* DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND *and* JANE DUDLEY, *wearing a small crown, attired in mourning.*

DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Now, Jane, that we have yoked thee to a throne,
And to thy furtherance have betrothed our lives,
What wilt thou for us?

JANE.

Is it thus you come
So soon to supplicate? Then do you think
That this same deed will plight my happiness?
Is it the summit of our mean desires
That we should sceptre others or ourselves?

DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Sum up our loving deeds: can'st not perceive
What toil and stress we have endured for thee?
Little thou know'st what voice I've had therein.

JANE.

Who mean good deeds do never glean heart-ease
In self-applause; but do reap silently
The harvest that such deeds do ever induce.
But what is done came not of my desire.

DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Philosophy smoothes not ingratitude.
Alas! had they but made me England's Queen,
The fairest offices should have been given
To them who forwarded my resolution.

JANE.

Thy wisdom's warranty imports but little.

DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Wilt thou, indeed, not make Lord Guildford, Duke?

JANE.

Thine importunity will not help to 't.

DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Poor Queen, too faint a heart reigns in thy breast,
That thou should'st fill thy court with royalty;

Mere freakish talents will engross thy soul;
When Grandeur, rather, with her gorgeous robes
Should, unfamiliar, kneel before thy feet.

[*Exit* DUCHESS.

JANE.

All that is fitting I will strive to gain.
Such poor vain-glory hath no place in me.
'Twill seem enough if I am free from pain
For one small hour each day of my dull reign.

SPIRIT OF THE TOWER.

A foot on the sliding snow:
A foot on the crest of a wave:—
Is the life of man but a show?
God, wilt thou not save?

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND, GUILDFORD DUDLEY, *and* SUFFOLK *laughing.*

SUFFOLK.

A poor, defenceless female!—Framlingham.
Fair Jane!—

JANE.

What makes my father's merriment ?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Only a jest, dear Jane, 'tis but a jest.

JANE.

Tell me your jest ! was there good wit in it ?

SUFFOLK.

Another woman importunes the lords,
Stating herself the queen they must obey:
At this, and nothing else, we found a laugh.

JANE.

Who was the woman ? aye, tell me her name.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The bastard Mary—see: here is her note.

[*Jane eagerly cons the letter.*

Only one thing, Suffolk, this matter needs ;—
That we prevent her flight. I do confess
She once forestalled my thought.

GUILDFORD.

Let her escape:
And she will quicken on the warlike French
To point their armaments against our shores.

SUFFOLK.

Surely we need not fear such things of her!

JANE.

I see no jest in this, Northumberland.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

All things go well. I'll show thee how 'tis well.
The treasury with great monies doth provide
And guarantee all after enterprise
On thy behalf. Our fleet lies in the Thames,
As sensitive unto the pulse of things
As a skilled doctor: should we stand in need,
The Council will not grudge.

JANE.

Nay, is it so?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Thou shalt discern how fortune favours thee;
And every day shall lavish joy on thee.

SUFFOLK.

This very morn we sent emissaries
To wrestle with her on this false presumption,
And to invite her soberly to yield.

SPIRIT OF THE TOWER.

Draw back your feet from the snow:
Tread not on the crest of a wave:
Make not your deaths but a show:
And God may ye save.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I heard a voice. Did'st thou not hear?

JANE.

Why, what was it? methought I too did hear.

GUILDFORD.

Oh! it was nothing; ever in the Tower
Strange sounds are heard and ghostly clamourings.

SUFFOLK.

But yonder see: who comes?

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESSENGER.

Your Grace: 'tis said a northern nobleman
With many thousand men tends hitherwards,
To controvert the will of the late King.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What, rascal, brought thee here to tell it us?
Get thee away: we value not such news.

[*Exit* MESSENGER.

SUFFOLK.

Here comes another.

JANE.

Oh! dear Northumberland, there may be truth
In what he says. Suffolk, my father, say—
What think you? was there any truth in him?

Enter MESSENGER.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What mak'st thou here?

MESSENGER.

Your Grace; I came to tell you the ill news:
The noble Earl of Essex and Lord Howard
With many hundreds fly to Framlingham.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Lord Howard's father will soon want his head.
Bid him prepare for—Death!

JANE.

Oh! say not so!
Whose word, but mine alone, should so command?
Where safety reigns, there anger doth usurp.

SUFFOLK (*kissing her*).

Show not thy fear, my child: all will be well.
[*Exeunt* JANE *and* GUILDFORD.
Methinks this news smacks something of the truth.
Northumberland, how wilt thou answer it? [*Aside.*
I do now apprehend some hereward danger.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Merely I'll send some spies to watch her movements.
Lo! yet—another.

Enter a MESSENGER.

SUFFOLK.

Fellow, what would'st thou?

MESSENGER.

Your Grace: my master bade me gallop hither
To tell you that six vessels of the fleet
Yielded themselves to Henry Jerningham,
And Framlingham doth bristle with their guns.
I saw vast armies thither hastening,
And the red standard proudly on the height.
Lord Derby and all Cheshire are in arms.

[*Exit* MESSENGER.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

This is more consequent. We must despatch.
This evening, by St. Paul! Go: give command.
Immediate action ours and no suspense,
How much in all things hangs on diligence!
With all our strength, let's smite the root at morn:
At eventide, there'll not be left a thorn.

You, Suffolk, are most fit to lead the troops.

SUFFOLK.

Indeed, the army knows me not a man
For generalship; nor have I their good-will.
You—you, Northumberland, are their favourite.
You have their love and means for their support.
The Queen, besides, wills that I stay with her
Till all goes smoothly.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Well, then, must I go.
And yet I'd rather keep one eye in London.
This present council lacks my confidence;
And in my absence—

SUFFOLK.

I'll take heed to that.
You shall not need to fear, methinks, their faith.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Thanks, noble Suffolk. Well, then, be it so,
I will at once prepare to go from hence.
My wife will be within your care and Jane's.

SUFFOLK.

Northumberland, God prosper thee, Farewell.
I well remember Ket's rebellion,
And how he quelled it. Aye! most soldier-like;
Though somewhat cruelly. Perhaps 'twas best.
But it has bred him many enemies
Among the Catholics. Well, I'll to Jane
And her acquaint with this our resolution.

SCENE II.—*A Tower of Framlingham Castle.*

MARY (*solus*).

Hail! mighty Framlingham, within thy walls
We may defy our blustering enemies:—
Laugh from thy frowning towers on the poor herd—
The crawling legions of Northumberland.
How grandly burns our standard on thy spire!
Caught by the loving sunbeams playfully,
That, faylike, flit among its ample folds;
Pouring a vermeil splendour on the breeze,
To bid true hearts unbosom from afar

Affection to their rightful sovereign.
Sussex and Bath encamp beneath my gaze,
Whose breasts do blossom with fidelity.
Sweet loyalty is breathed in everything.
Lo, from the glorious sea rise virgin clouds
And thrifty merchantmen, bound north and south,
Ride o'er its grand horizon like great gods.
I love the sea and all things of the sea ;
It is the mirror of infinity—
The glass of fashion for the sun himself.
And oft have I watched, how, in the summer night,
Mines of blue air and the high stars with gold
Tempered its grave, immeasurable face
With peace and splendour; while the radiant waves
Rang in the air their mournful melodies
O'er the bold seaman's grave. O ye stout hearts,
Who chide the thunder-songs that cleave the winds;
Who labour with high tempests; and strain hard
Amid terrific lightnings with your eyes ;
Who, with sea-beaten bodies and stopped ears,
Do handsomely outstare wild throats of death,
Shooting their tongues about ye and above,
And vasty fishes: herein we are One.

I, with the uproar rolled around my throne,
Will take strong heart from communing your ways;
And when hereafter ye shall honour me,
Yourselves ye'll honour, though unconsciously.
God speed us both!

Enter an ATTENDANT.

ATTENDANT.

My Lady Sovereign, it is said without,
That one, John Sulyard, Knight, of Wetherden,
Tends hitherwards with forces to your aid.

Enter SIR JOHN SULYARD.

MARY.

Hail! gallant knight, thou art amongst the first.
Say what thou would'st that I can do for thee,
Though I have little power to grant thee much;
Yet, when our arms have conquered in the fight,
I'll ask of thee to lead me to the throne.

SIR JOHN (*kneeling*).

Then, gracious sovereign, grant me but till then
That I may be thy body-guard. My limbs,

In such sweet service, would find betterment
For their old-aged infirmities.

MARY.

Henceforth
Thou art our body-guard. Arise, Sir John.

SCENE III.—*London. An open place.*

Enter TWO CITIZENS.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Lo! here they come, and here comes the Duke. There's he that slew the Duke of Somerset. I am not for war, and I don't wish 'em well that rob others. And all I say is that if God lets the Princess be so juggled from her throne, why, I'll worship the Devil. What say you, neighbour?

SECOND CITIZEN.

Why, they'll get their heads in jeopardy when they return.

Enter the DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, SOLDIERS, *a great crowd following.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The multitude seems eager to survey us;
But not one says, or seems to say, "God speed ye."

SIR JOHN GATES.

'Tis is ever so with these phlegmatic mobs.
Astonishment doth paralyse their tongues.
To them we seem as ghosts, and in this garb
Look supernatural and give affright.

NORTHUMBERLAND (*aside*).

Some disaffection herein I perceive;
And yet they chose me as the one most fit
To expedite this matter. But 'tis well:
I have bought all the tongues of all the preachers
Upon our cause and right to sermonize.
This of itself ensures our enterprise.
Let us along. [*Exeunt with flourish of trumpets.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber of State in the Tower, gorgeously decorated. Banks of flowers enline the window-sills and corners.*

Enter JANE DUDLEY *and the* DUKE OF SUFFOLK.

JANE.

Father, how fares it with Northumberland ?

SUFFOLK.

Well!—I scarcely know, my child; but—

JANE.

Why do you hesitate ? Speak what you know.

SUFFOLK.

A few desert him, and, although he needs,
The Council, here, delays to succour him.
Six days has he awaited fresh supplies—
But all will be right.

JANE.

But doth he not join battle ?

SUFFOLK.

No, dear child.

[*Kissing her.*

Like a wise Roman general, he delays ;
And when the enemy disgusts at this,
Doubtless a master-stroke will come from him ;
To sweep our troubles into the very sea,
And to assure our noble house for ever.

JANE.

I do hope so : he is a famous man ;
And is most popular among great men,
Who love his fearless ways ; so I do hear.
But why this jovial clamour in the street ?
What ! is to day a festival ? or what
Makes such rejoicing ? May be some bright deed
Of great Northumberland's ?

SUFFOLK.

Aye ! Let us see.

JANE.

The air is close; and in my heart, I feel
A dull oppression that would be at ease.
I will walk out upon the terrace-garden;
And you, dear father, join me presently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Near Bury. A thunderstorm.*

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND (*dejectedly*).

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What shall a man do when Fate fights against him?
When is the proper time for him to die,
If not when brain and heart are well-nigh maddened
With poisonous phantasies and hate of life?
When not the least warm flower that cheers the sky,
Nor pleasant faces that make glad the streets,
Nor tender voices that once fired his heart
Can gladden him? Oh! when should this one die?
I am this deep embodiment of woe;
From whose remorseful, yet repentant, heart
A mighty and dark ocean seems to issue,
Staining the smile of Nature. I am now

So fixed o'the topmost pinnacle of peril,
That my mere life is breathless with close death,
Whose taunting laughter stings my sleepless ears.
Escape is none. Six days have barely flown;
Yet, like a starving creature, has my force
By divers means grown lean and faltering,
Till I am left sans further hope of aid
By that most traitorous Council, who do owe
Their mere domestic comforts to my favour.
Ah! Heaven, thy curse be on ingratitude.
It is too foul for any place but hell,
Where I do think I am, that calls on thee.
Six days ago, my name brought hundreds here.
Six days ago, I was the only one;
To-day, I am as nothing. Oh! my heart,
Look back upon thy pleasures that are gone;
Peer forth unto those hazy flowers of joy
That thou didst grasp in hope,—that now are ghosts.
Our lives are merely little seeds of grass
That the light-hearted winds snatch to and fro.
The thin impression of a dead leaf in clay
Is more remembered than us—all ours
Is such a vain concern—Oh! sickly talk.

Yet must I shuffle off the climbing fear
Which claws its clammy fingers in my heart
And doth envenom all my better blood;
As if some fearful thing awaited me
Within the air I breathe. E'en but last night,
As I sat laggard in my lonely tent,
A little firefly, veering in its course,
Shone through the middle air at entering,
And, cruising round the oblique tenement
Came at my face: then pointed through the dark:
As if to beckon me what I should do.

Enter a COURIER.

What news bears thee so fast?

THE COURIER.

There is a revolution in London. Mary is made Queen. The Lord Mayor yesterday proclaimed her at Cheapside. To-morrow she will repossess the Tower. The town is fevered with excess of joy. Imagine, what a turn for things to take!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Didst thou see this or was it told to thee?

THE COURIER.

I saw it all and needed not be told.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What say they of Northumberland?

THE COURIER.

Aye! sir,
In faith, they cannot find their hate in words.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Do none hope for him?

THE COURIER.

Not one in the whole town. The merest idiot in the excitement, drivelling at his mouth, yells out, "Down with Northumberland"; and many crimes sit on the angry tongue of imputation. Were I the Duke I'd fly: ere long 'twill be too late.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Where should he fly?

THE COURIER.

To hell: for never will he reach the sweet heaven

with a poor lady's fate to drag him down. Besides, the Queen offers a thousand pounds to anyone who brings his head to her. I must away: my news should be here first. Farewell, good soldier; fight for the Queen. I see thou art a little wavering.

[*Exit* COURIER.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

He knew me not; yet where should I fly? my sentinels are posted at all points; and they will stop me if I go disguised. London was too large for my small trust. Would God I could now die! A fearful thought, like some dread nightmare, haunts me. Ah! poor Jane! poor Jane! Yet I will fly. Yes; I will.

Enter the EARL OF ARUNDEL *and a few* GUARDS.

ARUNDEL.

Northumberland, I do arrest thee here in the Queen's name.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What! Arundel! thou here!
Thou faltering knave! nay, dog—I will not yield.
Thou cursed hypocrite! corrupted cur!

God's figure is debased in such a man,
And tortured to the meanest shape on earth;
Didst thou not swear allegiance to our side?
Didst thou not—

ARUNDEL.

I prithee cease. I know your trick of oaths;
How well you chime upon two windy words,
And lash your tongue to fury.

NORTHUMBERLAND (*drawing his sword*).

Have at ye!

ARUNDEL.

Seize him, guards!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Poor curs!

ARUNDEL.

Come: lead him hence; our road lies towards the City. [*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE III.—*Tower of London.* JANE'S *apartment utterly disrobed of furniture. A row of armed soldiers line the wall.*

A VOICE.

Good-bye, dear father, for to-day good-bye.

Enter JANE *and* DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

DUCHESS.

What means this guard? We do mistake the room.

A CAPTAIN.

Nay, nay, your ladyships; in the Queen's name,
I must arrest you, and conduct you hence.

JANE.

Who art thou, man? And say, who is your Queen?

CAPTAIN.

Mary is Queen. I am her servant, madam.

Enter GUILDFORD DUDLEY *from opposite side.*

GUILDFORD.

Why, Jane! what means this guard? Art thou afraid
To walk alone or in slight company?

[*Advancing towards her.*

CAPTAIN.

Nay, my Lord Guildford,—sad my duty is:
I must arrest you too, in the Queen's name.

GUILDFORD.

Madman! who art thou?

CAPTAIN.

My Lord, I can but briefly explain: the Queen hath sent me to convey you to your trial, and for some hours you will be close confined.

GUILDFORD.

Thou base impostor. Help! Come, Suffolk! Ho!

[*No response.*

Is this my father's love? Then where is he?
Where his vast forces and authority?
This place doth seem as if it would dissolve

The tremor of a falling world is here,
O'ermast'ring my poor heart. Why do I live?
Is not all dark? Some monstrous flame
Hath swallowed up our hearth. The sun is gone:
But yet my love is here. Oh! thou sweet star,
Come, let me lay my trembling hand on thee,
And we will fly beyond these fearful things.
Thy form dispels the horror that appals
My bursting heart, and bids me see
In calm consideration what I see.
Come, love, let us begone while I am thus;
Ere I may show what ill becomes a man.

JANE.

O Heaven, that it should come to this—O, no!—
[*Clinging round her husband.*
Guildford, it is a dream—impossible!
[*A gloomy archway opens up.*
My heart still holds a longing love for life.
Am I not young? Yet death environs me.
There is a naked horror in their looks,
And their grey swords do shudder savagely.
Alas! I see the sluggish darkness rise
Vaporously within the yawning prison-doors,—

From all God's earth cut off: and there may be
The nauseous insects of neglected gloom,
And clammy reptiles of all form forgot—
Nature's black imps, all viperous with slime—
To creep around me: and the sweet division
Of the just night and day, obliterate,
And the dear ones I love. Ah! help me, God!
Then all the troubled echoes of dead men,
Whose dreadful anguish haunts the loathsome dark,
To harrow-up the sense of men alive:
So that the very air doth petrify for fear.
I shall go mad. Oh! no, I will be calm.
Sweet heaven, look down into these tears of mine.
Why did I hold such sinful imaginings?
Jesu, forgive thy erring child, whose soul,
By but returning love, like unto thine,
Had been exempt from such malignant fears.
I will bear all: why do we linger here?

DUCHESS.

Oh! do forgive me Jane, since we are thus
Together hurled into a common fate,—
That I did lack more kindliness to you.

JANE.

That all may be forgiven, is my prayer.
I do forgive thee, and thy husband too.

GUILDFORD.

Once more, unto mine eyes, dip thy sweet lights;
Wipe thou these misty tears from thy clear lids;
The world is worthless that can cause such tears.
Oh! let me press these dear—these blameless lips;
Then, hand in hand we'll go to consummate
All earthly troubles. Come, my sweet loved one.
God will have pity; though hard man have none.
True love until this day was hid from me:
Henceforth, come Pain, come Woe, come fearful Death;
All shall be welcume, so they serve but thee.

JANE.

Give to my brows a dark-leaved coronal;
Let autumn leaves inhabit all my hair;
Give me my old, sweet vestures once again,
And set these by; they are not meet for heaven.
So I'll exchange me for a queen of Sorrow,
Until bright angels bear me from you all. [*Exeunt.*

CAPTAIN (*aside*).

It is a beauty that trembles through my sense; yet lords my understanding. This work should have been given to somebody else. [*Exit.*

A WOMAN.

See there; how pale and thin she seems!

ANOTHER.

Better she had not been born.

A MAN.

A vile deceiver, under the form of an angel.

IST WOMAN.

I will not believe she had a share in it.

IST MAN.

Where there's a woman there's intrigue.

2ND WOMAN.

Go to: you have no touch of nature in you to speak so hard.

IST MAN.

So perish all who entertain treason.

A SOLDIER.

Vile creature, can'st not even leave grief alone?
I'll cleave thy head if thou speak'st again like that.

IST MAN.

'Tis all men's right to speak just as they think.

SOLDIER.

The mouths of brutes, however, must be stopped.
Get you along: you have no business here.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The Palace, London.*

Enter QUEEN MARY AND SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON.

MARY.

Where is this wretch that would defraud my right—
The meek-faced woman? Oh! some are born young
Inheritresses of hell's dark devices:
But I will be God's scourge to such of them
As come within my venture. Is it not

Some part of hell on earth when black dishonour
Struts so unblushingly about the realm ?
How shall the poor do, when the rich are so ?
And where is Justice, when Injustice reigns ?
I will take up its cause. Heaven prosper me :
And make examples of such tyranny.

SIR NICHOLAS.

Your Majesty did order their arrest.
Ere this, their palace is become their prison.

MARY.

Is it not just, that you do speak it so ?

SIR NICHOLAS.

All are not guilty that guilt sits upon.

MARY.

To such I will be merciful.

SIR NICHOLAS.

But then
Your cousin will find mercy at your hand.

MARY.

What! her?—that blossom of vice,—that fraudulence?
Did she not softly thank me for my presents
After her wedding? Did she not speak me love?
And in a way so admirable and sweet,
Beseemed an angel did invest her pen;
And all my heart grew open for her welfare?
Then, like a crafty and deep-delving woman,
Did the young monkey don my brother's crown,
And held his death from me; while I did suffer
All the extremes of grief and dread suspense;
And now mere force of right has beat her down,
Shall she have mercy? Nay, she shall have none,
Until bare justice has to me been done.
Bring me the warrant.

SIR NICHOLAS.

Soft, my Lady Queen.
Your Majesty is Wisdom unsurpassed:
But I do swear God's blessing and this people's
Upon your sacred head, if in no haste—
So unprepared, you cut off this young girl.
'Twas I, who, on her very wedding-night,

Bearing your warm affection to her ears,
Did hear her praise of your sincerity;
And in her talk express another wish:—
That she might go to her old home in Leicester.
Did this seem cunning, or like aspiration?

MARY.

Then was it all Northumberland, think you?

SIR NICHOLAS.

He has been kind to me. I am a man
With many imperfections like to him.
My heart would all revolt were I to speak
His condemnation. Pray, forgive me, madam.

MARY.

I will not force you: for your silence speaks.
So, leave the warrant far from me at present,
Lest feeling all my hate rise suddenly,
And seeing in a stroke of ink her death,—
Like one that on a monument beholds
The simple imminence of death all round,
And grows impassioned as his mind doth leap

Seeming to call his body after it,
Down through the clear abyss of groaning air,—
So might I rush, and dash the fatal stroke ;
And, ever after, be accursed for it.

SCENE V.—*A Chamber at Westminster. Lords of Council assembled. Northumberland guarded.*

GARDINER.

Your Grace betraying the Queen's confidence
Bids you not hope for mercy.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Is it so ?
Then, by this image, throned about my neck,
The Queen hath perjured all the name of woman.
[*Flings the Queen's portrait on the floor.*

A COUNCILLOR.

Our task is done, you will forgive us, sir ?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I do forgive ye all! I am most guilty.
Yet, Gardiner, be not joyful in thy task;
I am a Catholic as thou, at heart;
But have made my religion as a servant
To my ambition; but in it I die.
I have no more to say, but bid ye prove
The Lady Jane had naught to do with me.
I have betrayed her: God forgive me for't.
There never was a rose more innocent:
For what we forced on her, she did refuse;
And called on God to witness of the deed.

SCENE VI.—*A Cell in the Tower. Early morning.*

NORTHUMBERLAND (*awaking from his pallet*).

Oh! sleep is torture. Haggard I awake:—
Dreaming the cruel block, the multitude,
And all the dread appurtenance of death,
Breathless await me. See! 'tis not far off.

Faint orient beams already pale the stars,
And the withdrawing darkness seems to lean
On thy too heavy heart, Northumberland!

[*Morning in splendour.*

The sweet bird's note begins to carol forth
The dawning of new joy upon the earth,
Among the leafy bowers around this tower:
While but to me it preludes death's approach.
How soon 'twill swell into a thunder-song
Of gloom funereal, pulsing on the walls
Of sullen bodies that hedge me to death!
E'en as the labouring agèd pack-wolf dies,
Finding his funeral in the ravenous maws
Of his most dear companions; even so
Do they who licked the triumph of my ways
Gather to consummate my latest breath.
E'en base cold-footed flies befriend my brow;
As conscious of some strange catastrophe.
Ah! pitiful mankind! Yet when I weigh
The heartless deeds that worked this happening,
Methinks the lightning-stroke of headsman's axe
Is slender quittance. Yet who living knows
The million hours that moment's self may seem?—

But thou, poor Jane, have mercy on his soul
Who patterned with factitious ornament
Thy guileless life, and poisoned all thy peace.
Save only thee, all else were selfish slaves;
Save thee alone, we all have deservèd death.
May God, whose name doth tremble on my tongue,
Send legions to defend thine innocence!
May the proud fiend,—by Heaven! misnamed a woman—
Vouchsafe thee pity, having none for me!
For willingly I'd die, redeeming those
On whom I bring such ill-timed misery.
Water's the best sheath for a blood-stained sword,
But where is safety for a crimsoned mind?
Oh! Somerset, I oft think on thy fate
Wherein my fall lay roughly. Pity me,
Ye clouding heavens, while I farewell to earth,
Where uncompassionate man lives but to die—
To wander out a single loveless hour:
To kneel and make his death a stepping-stone
For other men to climb the same vain height.

[*Dies Iræ is heard.*

I hear the chanting of the chapel choir:—

It moves—it surges in the sad grey air.
They come. So soon, good captain?—ah! 'tis well.

(*A key is heard at the door-lock. The guards enter and conduct* NORTHUMBERLAND *without.*)

LAST SCENE.—*An Adjoining Cell.* DUKE OF SUFFOLK *asleep on a pallet. Enter* JANE *hurriedly.*

JANE.

Suffolk! my father! awake! awake! I say;
They have removed Northumberland from us.
Hark at the jeering of the populace!
Methinks I hear his voice! Ah! silence reigns.—
Now he kneels down:—alas! oh, hear that cry!—
It is all past. Oh! father,—he is gone.

APOTHEOSIS (with organ symphony).

SONGS AND POEMS.

SONGS AND POEMS.

No little, naked flower that grows
  But in my heart a shelter finds,
Be it a Marybud, or rose
  That weeps at the cruel winds.

The summer-storms, too, make me glad,
  That hush the merry hills :
They sing deep music when I'm sad,
  That soothes my ills.

Then, if all these things have a part
  And are the charm of me ;
Thou hast the lease of this my heart,
  And all my sweet is Thee.

TO W. M.

OH! sing of the silver-winged ships,
  And the flowerlike foam of their ways;
Ring the notes of the winds on your lips,
  And the roar of the thundery days;
Then breathe of all beautiful flowers
  That listen in ocean-caves,
'Mid echoing dells, through the hours,
  To the deep sea-pipes of the waves.

Oh! tell me, you who have seen them,
  Of virgin-islands that lie
In the shade of the ocean, to screen them
  From man's importunate eye;
And I will whisper the sorrows
  That weave a dark chain o'er my heart,
And show you the bright thread it borrows
  From life that your lips impart.

THE HARP OF BRYAN BOROIHME.

My soul to my music I've given,
  I've sat at the lone cottage door;
And the dying saw light in the heaven,
  Though the hurricane howled on the moor.
Oh! I've played my harp in the valleys of life,
  And the sunlight hath lived in its strings;
Though the pedals were fretted with falling tears,
  It shadowed forth beautiful things.

I've sung to a nobleman hoary,
  And shown him the sores of his land;
And his ancestors' deeds of glory
  A tempest have hurled from my hand;
Oh! I've played my harp in the steeps of this life,
  The lightning hath danced in its strings;
And I've rung from a hard, high lady soft tears,
  Like plentiful springs.
Yes! I've played my harp through the storms of life;
  Now the rain hath ruined its strings;
Its pedals are gnawed with canker of years;
  And the music hath taken wings.

REQUIESCAT ET RESURGET.

AUTUMN-SONG.

THE glory of summer is strewn on the earth ;
  The children of spring are dead ;
The loveliest buds of the old year's birth
  Are under the new year's tread.
But out of these leaves of the past shall arise,
  In beauty more beautiful far,
A fire to be blazoned abroad in Man's eyes,
  Sublime as a new-born star.

In place of a desert, rich land shall he find,
  Like a magical table spread ;
The sharpness of winter will pass as a wind,
  And love will be throned instead.
The rapture of spring in Man's heart shall be found,
  And a garner of good shall he store ;
And the hymns of the morning of life shall resound
  From his soul evermore.

I met thee when the leaves were young,
  My heart was sad and lonely;
And all the birds thy praises sung:
  Of thee, my darling, only.

Now all those things are left behind,
  And gloom is in the weather;
Yet, every morn, two birds I find
  That still sing sweet together.

In the toilsome hours of day
  You may never see Love's might.
As the sun doth glide away,
  He gilds the summits with his light;
So, at the approach of night,
Love climbeth to her mountain-height.

They say the buds are on the tree,
  The wood-birds sweetly sing,
Alas! this is no spring for me,
  Though others have their spring.

But when the summer blooms above,
In fulness of its power,
Then all the birds will say my Love
Lies under every flower.

Who conquers the gaunt phantom-ills of earth
Doth grow too strong for his own littleness;
Thus only doth the sea of life give birth
To a true pearl of price—light measureless.

From the backward paths of time,
Spirit-hands to it are pointing;
Tones of spirit-voices chime,
This new Lord of light anointing.

Then beauty mantles new and old
For him to whom this lamp is given;
He weaves his earthly thread of life with gold
From God in heaven.

It was not in thy heart's command
  In my poor heart to sow a tare ;
Where lilies smile from thy dear hand,
  And thy least word is fair.

Thought'st thou to have seen deep care
  Press down these eyelids of mine eyes ?
How should I understand despair,
  When thy hard words seem melodies ?

So soothe me to your breast again
  This loving-tide of year :
Man's heart needs no excess of pain
  While he remaineth here.

Oh ! where are flown those human lilies
That so late enwove these harp-strings ;
And the voice that answered their voice
From that virgin flood of feeling ?

Alas! these pale memorial-lilies,
Mournfully the harp-strings weaving,
Are but ghosts of past endearment
That, through my heart, thread their fingers.

DEATH-SONG OF THE YEAR.

YE children of spring and of summer, that lie o'er
the length of the land;
Sing and give ear to the voice of your mother, whose
death is at hand.
Oh! if in ye buds that are bruised under foot, any
spirit remains,
Sing me the score of your fallings, that darken the
paths of the plains.
For the God of the skies gave blessing to earth on
the day ye were born;
And breathed in your budding long life, and the
spiritual beauty of morn.
Colour and loveable shape, he gave ye, for infinite
praise,
Out of the darkness and change of the breath of the
wintry days.
Earth was rejoiced in the rapture ye shed on the
hearts of her children that weep;
For ye poured on their hurts a delight that wove them
Elysian sleep.

And sweet were your tremulous voices, that sighed
like the music of strings
In the cool spring-wind that God gave ye, to wake
ye to life with its wings.
Oh what have ye done with your beauty and
strength, and the life of your marvellous form,
That now, no longer, command ye the hearts of your
lovers grow warm?

(A VOICE FROM THE LEAVES.)

The brows of a bard,
In the hour of his prime,
We were given to guard
From the ripples of time.

(A VOICE FROM YOUNG BLOSSOMS.)

We grew for a space without speck,
Unloved and unsought, in the wild;
Then we bloomed on the snow-white neck
Of a beautiful child.

(A VOICE FROM BLOWN BLOSSOMS.)

With balm of the jasmine laden,
We blossomed—the light of the sward:
Till the locks of a love-lorn maiden
We broidered: then passed to her lord.

(A VOICE FROM OTHER LEAVES.)

The brows of a bard,
In his faltering breath,
We were given to guard;
But were gathered of Death.

(A VOICE FROM OTHER BLOSSOMS.)

With life of the jasmine laden,
We gladdened the breasts of the sward:
Then strewed we the grave of a maiden—
The love of her grief-stricken lord.

(VOICE OF LEAVES AND BLOSSOMS.)

From all this gladness and grief we lie down together to die:
For the lives of Sorrow and Joy are brief. Death comes equally.

Oh! mother! our moments are few; for the lamp of
the year fast wanes.
Come! come! for we hear the new voices of others
who wist not our pains.

THE PRINCESS AND THE FAIRY.

I.

OH! tell me, dear fairy, when I am made queen,
Shall the walls of my castles with silver be bound
And sprinkled with gems untold?
Shall my army be stronger than e'er hath been seen?
Will they crown me as oft as I wish to be crowned
With beautiful crowns of gold?

II.

Will they sing me the songs that I wish to be sung?
Will they tenderly love me, and bring at all hours
New things of the fairest mould?
Will my name be a word on the whole world's tongue?
From the ends of the earth will they send me rare flowers,
And books with covers of gold?

III.

"If thine heart is as fair as thy face, sweet child!
When queen of this realm, thy people shall bear
Thee love of a price untold.
Instead of hard sway, thy rule shall be mild:
For music, the voice of thy God in thine ear;
And truth for a crown of gold."

In the heart of the sweet Spring-branches,
  I hear a little bird sing:
If I slily creep under their shadow,
  Will that little bird take wing?

Two eyes, like blue-winged lightning,
  Dart out from the leaflets above.
The song hath flown up to heaven;
  But she remaineth;—my Love.

The joyous birds adown the trees,
  Thy sweet approach do sing:
No floweret here but clearly sees
  The love that thou dost bring.

Come, Love, unto my arms, oh! come!
  While time to us is given;
Nor fear their keen reproach at home,
  Beneath this free bright heaven.

FALSE, as shadows on the waters,
  Are the shiftings of thy mind;
Thou—the loveliest of earth's daughters;
  Of them all—the most unkind.

Thought I, my deep love would save thee?
  Alack! I was too blind;
For every kiss I gave thee,
  Two pangs you left behind.

SONNET.

SWEET friend, at my long absence feel no fear.
Through many nights of late I've fought with
Pain;
Yet, in the truce, sweet-dreaming have I lain,
And thought the medicine of thy voice was near,
Thus feeling that thy spirit hovered here
(Though 'twas the flower of my fevered brain);
Now that the dawn of health wakes me again,
Know that, since last we met, thou art more dear;
For sudden sorrow makes the heart more warm
That's delicate: e'en as the tender dove
Grows anxious combating a summer storm.
When Death defeats, our value flies above,
We re-arise in a more perfect form;
So when my friendship slept, it turned to love.

THE CAVE OF TOLEDO.

I.

"I HAVE learned that the joys of to-morrow
O'er-balance the griefs of to-day;
That gladness is gotten of sorrow,
And giveth a sword for to slay.
Were we born to lack bread and to shiver—
We two that were wealthy of old?
Nay! wife, I have heard of a giver
Whence cometh more gold."

II.

"Alonzo, be not a partaker
Of that which pertains to the strong:
And know by the lips of your Maker,
Necessity is not a wrong."
"Nay, wife, but this patron upstoreth
Strange flowers, all fashioned of gold,
In a cavern; whoever exploreth,
Earns honour untold.

III.

"'Neath the mouldering crypt of Saint Gines,—
Why, wife, do you look so afraid?—
This night I shall tramp with sereneness:
To-morrow our debts will be paid."
For who giveth ear to strange visions
When the blood of his body lacks bread?
Will hunger not dare apparitions
That rise from the dead?

IV.

That night he invoked the Immortal
With prayers of all forms and degrees;
Then he passed through the rickety portal,
Bent down on his hands and knees.
He rambled and sang in his pleasure,
In the gloom of those cavernous halls;
But whenever he snatched at a treasure,
'Twas slime on the walls.

V.

At last, his ears gather the thunder of water ;
  Then silence reigns, as in the grave.
Then the echoing bluster of devilish laughter
  Rings harsh from the deeps of the cave.
Then hears he a roll as if billows were breaking,
  Upraised of a beautiful breeze ;
But his heart with a tempest of terror is quaking :
  He quivers and flees.

VI.

Then flashes of fire that blind him
  Rush out from the roof and the sides :
And a horrible phantom behind him
  Pursues, and pursuing, derides.
At the door of the cave down-stricken
  He lay at the waking of light ;
They fed him ; but nothing would quicken.
  He died ere the night.

VII.

And then the good friar Don Josef
  Uplifted his sapient tongue:—
" Had he rested contented, who knows if
  This man had lived happy and long ?
But Avarice is a sweet syren
  Who wheedles us into her wave;
And he that seeks gold may find iron;
  And, haply, a grave."

MAIDEN cloudlet, all alone,
  Whither goest thou?
O'er the bright air, lovely one,
  Wing me with thee now.

Through the meshes of thy heart,
  Softly smiles the sun.
Oh! of thy love deign me a part,
  Since on earth is none.

MUZA THE MOOR.

"STERN Fate's implacable feet tread out the great heart of our city,
Famine and frenzy are kings, and the foe from without hath no pity.
Oh! list ye the wailing of widows o'er bodies that beg for a grave,
While the whines of their ravenous children ope heavenward, 'God will not save.'
Thunder, and fire, and tempests of blood, and maniac-laughter
Smite all our flesh, and confound where the eagles are hov'ring after.
No longer I'll dwell in her gates; for Granada's despair is too deep;
This night I will mount the fleet Arab, and fly through the foe in its sleep:
For the end of disaster is nigh to us all, both man and no man.
But fight as a lion will I—I—Muza ben Abel Gazan."

Fair flow the waters of Xenil, embroidered with pale moonlight;
While the balm of her sweet flag-flowers is sprinkled abroad on the night.
Like blossoms alight in the sky are the full-flaming stars in the heaven;
Like barklets asail on a summer sea are the cloudlets across them driven.
Now Muza is loosed from the walls, and his charger foretokens from far,
Strange horsemen are roving his pathway, adorned in the toilet of war.
And the heart of his master swings fierce for delight, when, as ghosts from their graves,
He watches the shadows of foemen aslant on the mystical waves.
"Stand and declare, or from hence, by the saints, thou goest not forth,"
Shouts the headmost warrior. And such was the latest he uttered on earth;
For the Moor, in his reckless revenge, spurred hard on his hoodwinked foe;
And at the first crash of his ponderous lance, three posted below.

Then some flee pale from his sight, as men by a demon beset:
One alone, like a rampart, remains, heart-burning for victory yet.
But now in that tempest of strokes, his steed is the foremost to fall:
And hellish the havoc they deal on each other. On God is their call.
Aloft are their bright knives brandished; and ever indifferent of death,
They rush and gasp out for the issue in anguish and treasure of breath.
Along the green banks of the Xenil at length bold Muza retires,
Crimsoned with desperate hurts from a sword that he hates yet admires.
"Allah!" at last in his fury he shouts, and a pathway he paves
With surf from the chinks in his armour: then leaps, and is ruined with waves.
Fair flow the waters of Xenil, and theirs is the soul of the man:
The soul of the last of the Moorish chiefs—Muza ben Abel Gazan

NIGHT.

DOWN from the haughty mountains, pale,
  Walks odour-breathing Night;
And, o'er the bell-flowers in the vale,
  Draweth her dim starlight.
And from a frail vase doth she pour
  The spirit of her waters:—
A balmy dew that kindles o'er
  The lips of earth's sweet daughters.
Now on the ever-heaving waves
  Doth she gently tread;
And her soft, raven wing she laves
  Until the day be shed.

A STIR in the heaven;
  A rain-drop that falls,
Warm and wind-driven,
  The sick flower recalls.
So a sigh from thy bosom,—
  A tear shown to me,—
Makes my heart blossom
  With yearning for thee.

I.

ALL the rosy hues of evening
  Gather on thy soft cheek, Love;
And the smile that springeth through them
  Is the smile of heaven above;
And thy sweet, blue eyes, my darling,
  Such are to the angels given;
And these lips, I press so fondly;—
  They were shaped in heaven.

II.

All those rosy hues of evening,
  Revelling on thy soft cheek, Love,
Weave a mist of rainbows sweetly,
  To relieve those lights above;
And, like dreaming flowers that lightly
  Breathe upon the breast of heaven,
Are thy fluent arms where nightly,
  I, for aye, am shriven.

RETRIBUTION.

UNDER the surge on the summer shore
  Arise strange harmonies;
Methinks each wave in its petulant roar
  Wooeth the virgin trees;
And the birds in the branches sing back
  And restrain their querulous love:
But the night that was fair staineth black
  The dead air around and above.

The stars that for love did awaken
  Are veiled in a film of mist:
And the hills in the distance are shaken
  With thunder that they have kissed.
Now falleth the stroke of the soft summer-wind,
  And the red-bright wine of the sky;
And the bitter waves laugh as the leaves from the rind
  Are smitten fearfully.

THE BUTTERFLY.

As thou wanderest through the wild,
  Vex not the butterfly, sweet child:
For, know, that fleet and graceful flight,
  By God above, to it was given
That, on those pretty wings of light,
  Thy soul should post to heaven.

SONNET.

I SAW an antique chamber softly kept
With lordship quaint, and grotesque tapestries;
And one sick flame betrayed the visages
And wasted shapes of them that therein slept.
The air heaved perfume, and there faintly crept
A miracle of sunless harmonies;
At whose chance chords some ope'd unmindful eyes,
Then lassitude again their visions swept.
No sleep in their dull limbs of wearied might,
Methought; yet was it said, within them, strife
'Twixt their own selves was waged and their delight;
But like to mists, at dawn, on mountains rife,
Their wanton attitudes. No morn most bright,
Have I since learned, can lift them back to life.

A HERALD of evening
  Came out of the west;
It breathed on the leaves,
  And brought forth song;
And rang from the rose,
  As it wandered along,
A rapturous odour:
  Then flowed into heaven.

I.

FRAIL flowers, I gave ye to a maid,
And deemed ye unloved were:
Sweet, silver daughters of the glade,
What did ye there?

II.

Now lifeless ye return to me,
And fill me with faint fear;
And I beseech ye tearfully,
What do ye here?

FALLEN BLOSSOMS.

I.

UNTO the winning-thread doth now draw near
My wasted spirit. In the wind are blown
Spring's dove-like blossoms, to my heart so dear;
Abased, while yet alive, from your bright throne,
Will man's stern heart not mete ye one small tear,—
From whom his eye hath drunk in beauty's fill?—
Or do ye yet, unfallen ones, atone
For the belovèd lost, that now lie still,
Just where they fell, in youth's full splendour flown?

II.

Soon shall the unctuous sod us both consume,
And o'er our tombs wreathe Nature's sweetest smile;
While our immortal soul, like a bright plume
Borne heavenward, shall unloose all earthly guile!
I, who have loved the flowers that did illume
My grievous passage toward this latter goal,
And music that doth cleanse this world's defile,
Do hear the soft song of my inmost soul:—
"They, too, to heaven thy path shall reconcile."

TO JOACHIM RAFF (COMPOSER), *July* 8, 1878.

THE lightning of bright songs
To thy sovereign soul belongs,
Whose symphony is blending
For ever.
The tender air that throngs
With rapture never-ending
To the giver.

The murmur of it rings,
Like the undulating wings
Of virgin doves descending,
Whirlwind-driven.
The burthen of it sings,
As when a god is sending
Song from heaven.

And one, whose glassy veins
Are vexed with mortal pains,
Doth feel divine amending
From its motion;
E'en death more glory gains,—
As a billow shoreward bending
From the ocean.

EVENING.

COME hither, love, unto this grove,
  And list the untiring tale
Told every night, in the fair starlight,
  By the sweet nightingale.
For the brown bird's throat hath a sweeter note
  Than the garish birds of the day:
And, perchance, my love will sweeter prove
  Than flattery's flowered lay.

THOU wert crowned with lilies and roses;
  Spring daisies looked forth from thine hair;
Thy heart was made glad with sweet posies,
  In April last year.

In mine eyes there were none of earth's creatures
  That moved with a beauty like thine;
My heart was ablaze of thy features,
  Each one most divine.

Then was I for ever to lose thee;
  Stern grief hath since fretted thy brow;
My darling! thou wilt not refuse me,
  Who sue for thee now!

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

I.

SOFT echo of the voices of the past!
Soul of the present! sing again that note
With which thou mak'st the shelter of yon leaves
A fane of music, wherefrom wildly float
Love's broken roses of sweet sound that waste
I' the darkening air. Sweet bird! O, sing again.

II.

In the thick branches night already falls,
And all the morning seraphs are asleep,
While thy free song compels their lovelorn dreams.
Cease not, sweet bird; but from thine heart let leap
The pent-up passion of celestial song,
And let it fall the whole deep night along.

WHEN the harebell opes its lips
  For the amorous skies to kiss;
And the fresh-winged seraph sips
  Honey from the beds of bliss;
Then we—like all around, above—
Will banquet on the sweets of love.
  Then we, &c.

But when the latest flower is gone,
  And the dull clouds enshroud the earth;
When Nature everywhere doth mourn
  The death of them she brought to birth;
Oh! when the hoar-frost chills the bricks,
Then must we forth to gather sticks.
  Oh! when, &c.

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